

Acton Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes for 4/13/2009

Present: Stephen Baran, Chair; Mike Gowing, Vice-Chair; Sally Thompson, Secretary; Barbara Tallone, Treasurer; Anita Dodson; Pat Ellis; Gena Manalan; Paul Turner; Jean Fleming, Director; Jim Papachristos, Friends of the COA; Charlie Aaronson, Senior Center Expansion Committee; Detective Dan Silva, Liaison Police Department.

Absent: Connie Ingram, President, Friends of the COA;

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 3:45 PM on 04/13/2009 at the Senior Center by Steve Baran.

Review of the Minutes:

The minutes of the Acton Council on Aging Board meeting for 03/09/09 were accepted with one correction related to old business.

Director's Report:

Jean Fleming expressed her gratitude that the 2010 budget has been passed by the Town. This will mean a continuation of services for the COA. Increased hours for the outreach coordinator and approved funding for this position have also been passed.

The \$36,000 for Senior Center improvements was also passed at the Town Meeting. These improvements will make the Senior Center both safer and more versatile as a space for Acton's seniors. Staff are prioritizing from the below list.

1. New flooring for the living room.
2. Permanent partitions in the dining room.
3. Senior computer corner with wireless internet access.
4. Windows in swinging doors and exterior office door.
5. Soundproof flexible partition in living room.
6. Video cameras in entry way/ living room/ dining room.
7. Enclosed walkway connecting living and dining rooms.
8. Shed entrance to bulkhead.
9. Carpeting in office area.

Carol Steiner has been selected as the Acton Town Employee of the Year. She will be recognized with her award at Town Meeting on 4/13/09.

The May-June COA Newsletter is in the works. Final submission of articles is due by April 17, 2009. The next edition of the COA Newsletter will be a combined July-August two month edition. We now have 200 seniors who receive their newsletter by email, saving paper, printing, and postage.

The Striders walking group will be meeting on Tuesdays at 2pm. All are welcome.

A trip to the Russian Icon Museum in Clinton, MA is scheduled for 4/14/09. A smaller bus has been arranged for this trip.

There will be a Talent Show planning meeting on April 16 at 10am with an eye toward a show for next fall.

Monday April 27 is the Town of Acton employee sponsored senior appreciation lunch.

Lt. Dan Silva will be updating seniors at their monthly breakfast on May 15th.

On May 20, 2009 at 6:30-8:00pm Blue Cross Blue Shield will present health plan options for people thinking about retirement.

An Art Matters program on Post Impressionism will be held May 21, 28, and June 4.

Members of the board recognized COA staff for the variety of excellent programs being offered.

Financial Report:

Barbara Tallone read the financial report of the non-personnel budget. There was an opening balance of \$10,002 and a closing balance of \$8,619. There was a total of \$1,383 in expenses for the month (including: program supplies, travel, office supplies, newsletter printing and postage).

Legislative Coffee Hours:

Representative Jen Benson will be coming for a coffee hour on May 29, 2009. Discussion ensued about how to best make use of this opportunity for seniors. A suggestion was made to encourage interested individuals to submit questions to COA staff to be forwarded to Rep. Benson so that she might prepare or research senior's concerns.

Regional COA Meeting:

Mike Gowing and Jean Fleming attended a meeting of the COA Directors from the Minuteman region with the respective COA board of directors on Friday March 20 at the Bedford Senior Center. Some COA directors in local towns are struggling to maintain services to their seniors. Through careful town management, Acton has been able to maintain services at the same level. The senior center provides a sense of community. Our outreach worker and van driver can help to identify individuals who may be at risk for isolation.

Brandeis Conference:

Steve Baran attended a conference at Brandeis called "Living Longer on Less in Massachusetts". He quoted that \$190 billion in care is provided by family members. Steve presented other statistics about how people are faring with the current economic down turn. A discussion ensued about Long Term Care insurance and the adequacy of coverage for care.

Safety Net:

Board members wondered whether the safety net in Acton is working for seniors. Fuel assistance applications are increased for the current year. Last year there were 41 applications, this year thus far there are 46 applications. The COA staff continue to work with the Acton social worker to make appropriate referrals.

Board Membership:

Congratulations to Mike Gowing who was elected as our newest Selectman. Mike tendered his resignation during our meeting. We are fortunate that there are three interested citizens who would like to join our board and are awaiting full vetting by the VCC: Charlie Aaronson, Jim Papachristos, and Barbara Willson.

Old Business:

The COA board will focus its priorities for the spring on the improvement and maintenance projects necessary at the Senior Center.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the COA Board is May 11, 2009 at 3:45p.m. at the Senior Center.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Thompson, Secretary